Data and Information Policy

NASA Earth Science Statement on Data Management

NASA's Earth Science program was established to use the advanced technology of NASA to understand and protect our home planet by using our view from space to study the Earth system and improve prediction of Earth system change. To meet this challenge, NASA promotes the full and open sharing of all data with the research and applications communities, private industry, academia, and the general public. The greater the availability of the data, the more quickly and effectively the user communities can utilize the information to address basic Earth science questions and provide the basis for developing innovative practical applications to benefit the general public.

A common set of carefully crafted data exchange and access principles was created by the Japanese, European and U.S. International Earth Observing System (IEOS) partners during the 1990s and the early years of the 21st century. From these principles, NASA has adopted the following data policy (in this context the term 'data' includes observation data, metadata, products, information, algorithms, including scientific source code, documentation, models, images, and research results):

- NASA will plan and follow data acquisition policies that ensure the collection of long-term data sets needed to satisfy the research requirements of NASA's Earth science program.

- NASA commits to the full and open sharing of Earth science data obtained from NASA Earth observing satellites, sub-orbital platforms and field campaigns with all users as soon as such data become available.

- There will be no period of exclusive access to NASA Earth science data. Following a post-launch checkout period, all data will be made available to the user community. Any variation in access will result solely from user capability, equipment, and connectivity.

- NASA will make available all NASA-generated standard products along with the source code for algorithm software, coefficients, and ancillary data used to generate these products.

- All NASA Earth science missions, projects, and grants and cooperative agreements shall include data management plans to facilitate the implementation of these data principles.

- NASA will enforce a principle of non-discriminatory data access so that all users will be treated equally. For data products supplied from an international partner or another agency, NASA will restrict access only to the extent required by the appropriate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

- In keeping with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, NASA will charge for distribution of data no more than the cost of dissemination. In cases where such dissemination cost would unduly inhibit use, the distribution charge will generally be below that cost.

- Through MOUs and agreements with appropriate interagency partners, NASA will ensure that all data required for Earth system science research are archived. Data archives will include easily accessible information about the data holdings, including quality assessments, supporting relevant information, and guidance for locating and obtaining data.

- NASA will engage in ongoing partnerships with other Federal agencies to increase the effectiveness and reduce the cost of the NASA Earth science program. This interagency cooperation shall include: sharing of data from satellites and other sources, mutual validation and calibration data, and consolidation of duplicative capabilities and functions.

- NASA will, in compliance with applicable Federal law and policy, negotiate and implement arrangements with its international partners, with an emphasis on meeting the data acquisition, distribution, and archival needs of the U.S.

- NASA will collect a variety of metrics intended to measure or assess the efficacy of its data systems and services, and assess user satisfaction. Consistent with applicable laws, NASA will make those data available for review.

The data collected by NASA represent a significant public investment in research. NASA holds these data in a public trust to promote comprehensive, long-term Earth science research. Consequently, NASA developed policy consistent with existing international polices to maximize access to data and to keep user costs as low as possible. These policies apply to all data archived, maintained, distributed or produced by NASA data systems.

References

The National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §2451, *et seq*.

The Land Remote Sensing Policy Act of 1992, 15 U.S.C. §5601, *et seq*.

The Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. §3501, *et seq*.

The Freedom of Information Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. §552 (1994), amended by P. L. 104-231.

OMB Circular A-130 (February 8, 1996)

National Space Policy (NSTC-8, September 19, 1996).

Presidential Directive (NSPD-7), Space-Based Global Change Observation (May 28, 1992).

Statements on Data Management for Global Change Research (Office of Science and Technology Policy, July 1991).

Mission to Planet Earth Commercial Strategy (March 1997).

IEOS Data Exchange Principles.